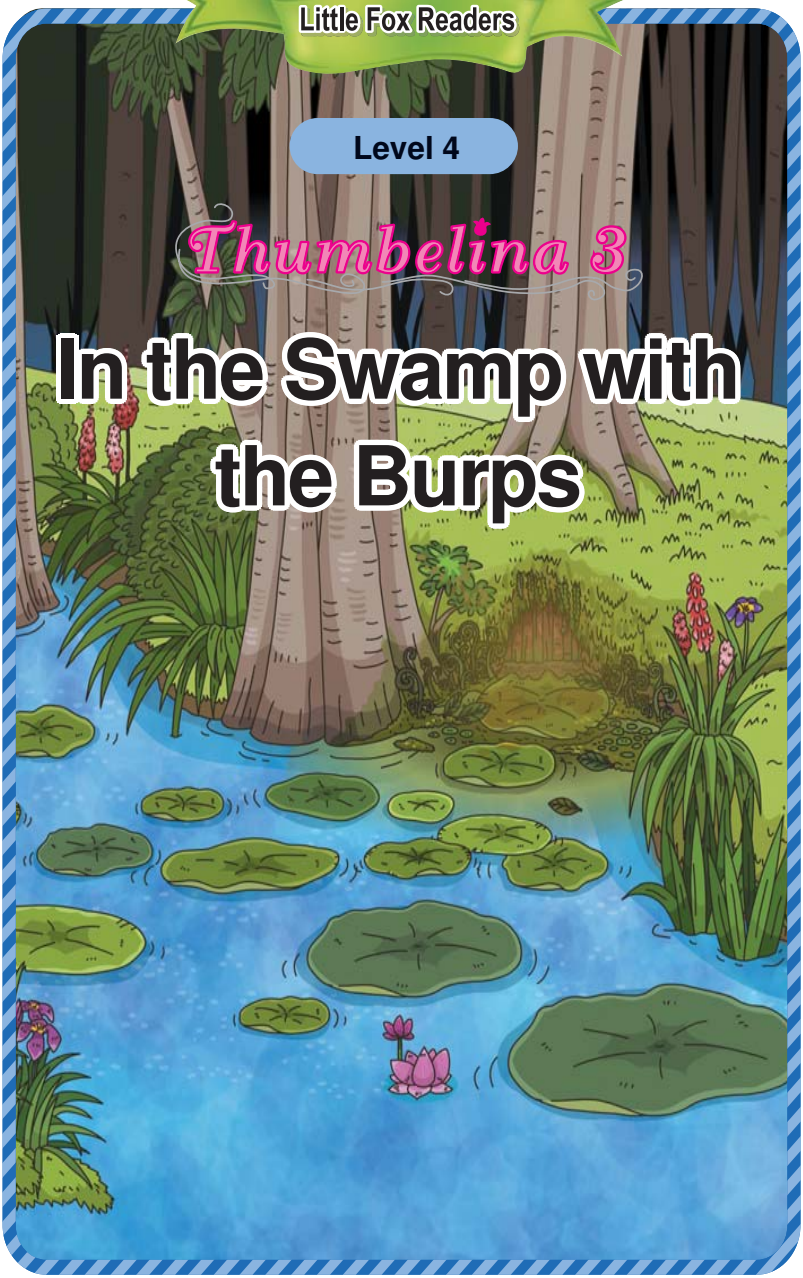
Little Fox Readers

Level 4

Thumbelina 3

In the Swamp with the Burps



Little Fox

Mrs. Burp lived in an old, smelly swamp. She took Thumbelina to a lily pad in a stream nearby.

"This is your new home," said the toad.

"I don't like it here," said Thumbelina.

"Well too bad," said Mrs. Burp. "You're not going anywhere." Mrs. Burp disappeared into the darkness.

Thumbelina was scared. Water was all around her, and there was no way to escape.

"I miss my mother," she whispered, then cried herself to sleep.

The next morning, Mrs. Burp was up early. She woke up her son.

"Croaky! Let's go meet your bride," she said excitedly. "Be on your best

behavior."

Croaky blinked slowly. "Okay, Momma."

Thumbelina was just waking up.

"What a terrible dream!" she said. Then she opened her eyes. The two toads were staring at her.

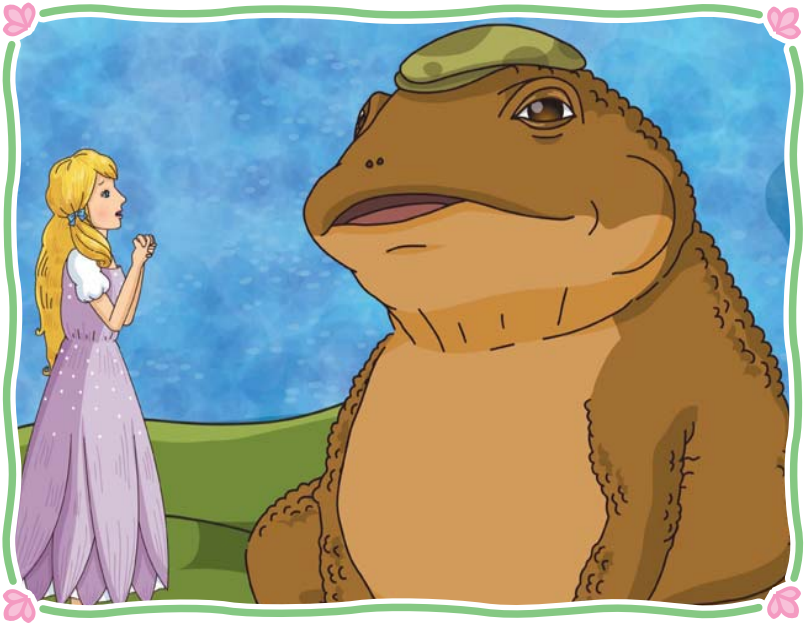
Thumbelina stared back. Croaky was

even bigger than his mother.

"It wasn't a dream," the tiny girl said sadly.

"This is Croaky, your future husband," Mrs. Burp said to her.

"She's pretty, Momma," Croaky said. Suddenly his eyes moved. A small fly flew by. Croaky quickly stuck out a sticky



tongue and ate the fly.

"Ugh!" said Thumbelina.

"Now get to know each other," said Mrs. Burp. "I'll be getting ready for your wedding." She hopped away.

"Please take me home," begged Thumbelina.

Croaky shook his head. "Momma

would be angry. And you don't want to make Momma angry."

"But I don't want to marry you," said Thumbelina.

Croaky let out a loud burp. The sound made Thumbelina hate him more.

"I'll make a great husband. I can catch any kind of bug," he boasted. "I'll show

you.”

Just then a beautiful butterfly flew by.

“Watch me!” Croaky jumped into the water, splashing Thumbelina.

He jumped from lily pad to lily pad, chasing the butterfly. Thumbelina had to do something.

“Croaky!” she yelled loudly. “Leave

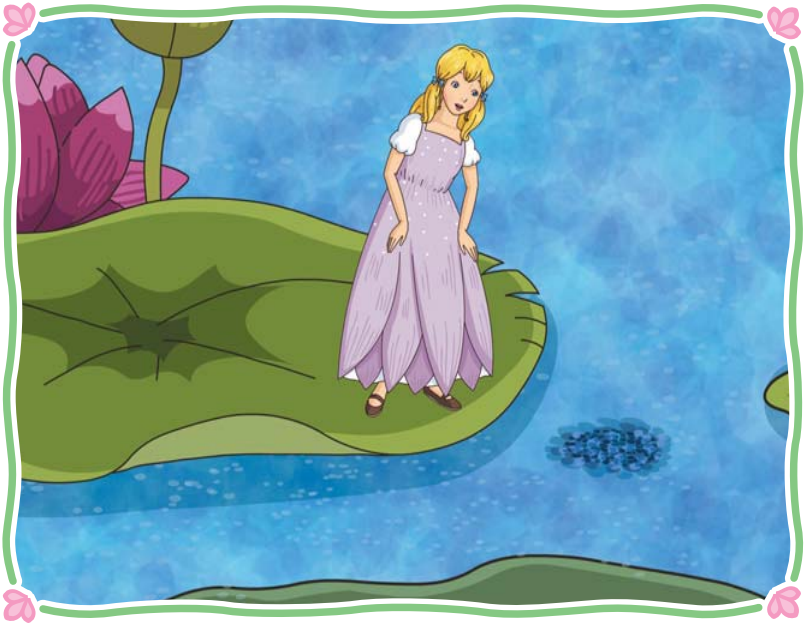
that butterfly alone, you big bully!"

Croaky stopped and burst into tears. "I'm going to tell Momma what you said!" he yelled and hopped away.

Thumbelina watched the butterfly fly away safely.

"I've got to escape too!" she cried.

"Maybe we can help," a voice said.



"Who said that?" Thumbelina looked around. She saw no one.

"Down here," said the voice.

Thumbelina looked down at the water. She saw a school of fish. One of them was looking right at her.

"Croaky thinks it's fun to scare others," said the fish.

"I can see that," said Thumbelina.

"Don't worry," said the fish. "We'll help you escape."

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